

Sincock, Jennifer

From: Capacasa, Jon
Sent: Thursday, March 24, 2016 10:45 AM
To: Scalia, Kim
Subject: Fw: Coordination on Agricultural BMP Survey in PA

From: Capacasa, Jon
Sent: Wednesday, January 27, 2016 9:03 AM
To: Aunkst, Dana
Cc: Batiuk, Rich; Shenk, Kelly; DiPasquale, Nicholas
Subject: Coordination on Agricultural BMP Survey in PA

Dana,

It's unfortunate that the weather conditions interrupted our planned meeting on the Bay Strategy this week. I'd like to follow-up on one item which is time sensitive - that is, the planned Penn State U Survey of Ag Non-Cost Share BMPs for the farm community.

We support your efforts to work with Penn State and the agricultural industry to develop the Pennsylvania Farm Conservation Practices Inventory to better account for and credit agricultural conservations practices regardless of the funding source. It would be very helpful to get clarification from the PA agencies on the specific purpose and intent for use of this survey data of farm practices. If the intent of the survey is to secure credit for on the ground practices for the CBP Partnership watershed model, then additional work is required now to adhere to the CBP's guidelines. PADEP should seek approval from the Chesapeake Bay Program's (CBP) Agriculture Workgroup of its voluntary farmer survey in order to ensure that the practices collected through the survey can be credited for nutrient and sediment reduction credit in the CBP partnership's Watershed Model.

We know that it is important to ensure that farmers are getting credit for the practices they are fully implementing on the ground and that the Commonwealth sees the full picture of what's been done to date and where opportunities are for further reductions.

First and foremost, PADEP should present the survey to the Chesapeake Bay Program's Agriculture Workgroup for its review and approval to ensure it is consistent with the workgroup's approved verification guidelines. Also, PADEP should present the survey to the CBP's Watershed Technical Workgroup to ensure alignment with the practices that are credited in the CBP partnership's Watershed Model. Your staff is aware of this review process as it successfully went through the process to get PADEP's conservation tillage transect survey approved by the AgWG for credit in the CBP partnership's Watershed Model.


I recommend that that PADEP present its survey to the Ag Workgroup for review and approval at its quarterly meeting on February 17th and 18th. To expedite the process, the Watershed Technical Workgroup members could be invited to the Ag Workgroup to participate in the discussion. In preparation for the Ag Workgroup meeting, I recommend that PADEP staff meet with the Mark Dubin, the Ag Workgroup Chair, and key

representatives from the Watershed Technical Workgroup to discuss the survey and what should be covered at the Workgroup meeting.

Getting the approval from the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership is critical in ensuring that this practice data can be credited in the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership's Watershed Model. PADEP has demonstrated use of this process in successfully crediting non-cost shared conservation tillage acres in the Watershed Model.

If we can assist in any way with next steps, please let Kelly Shenk or me know how we can assist. Thanks.

Jon

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